

Giles Building
423-29 South Wabash Avenue
Chicago
Cook County
Illinois

HABS No. ILL-1014

HABS
ILL,
16-CHIG,
16-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

GILES BUILDING

HABS
ILL,
16-CHIG,
16-

Location: 423-29 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Present Owner: Roosevelt University, Chicago, 430 South Michigan Avenue.

Present Occupant: Favor, Ruhl, and Co.

Present Use: Store.

Statement of Significance: This is an example of Chicago Commercial Architecture of the period just following the great fire of 1871.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners (chain of title):
Legal description of the property: Lot 6 in Block 9 of fractional section 15-39-14, Board of Canal Commissioners.

The following is an abstract of the chain of title recorded in Book 461, pp. 245, 280, in the Cook County Recorder's Office.

The property was originally owned by Thomas L. Parker who sold it to George E. Purington on March 25, 1872 (Document 20004). Purington sold it shortly after, on July 16, 1872, apparently to William A. Giles, with a mortgage on the property being held by the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company (Document 43605). Giles received a clear title to the property from the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company April 19, 1884 (Document 538767) and owned it until his death (inventory recorded February 10, 1914, Document 140/27). On July 14, 1887, Giles entered into a party wall agreement affecting the wall on the south side of his building with the Chicago Auditorium Association (Document 850788). Following Giles' death the property passed to Robert D. Mc Faden, Mark S. Willing, and Margaret Mc Faden Willing (Document 13569502 of August 7, 1945, Document 436/140 of August 13, 1945). The present owners, Roosevelt University, received the property from Margaret Mc Faden Willing August 20, 1951 (Document 15150464).

2. Date of erection: Dated c. 1875 by Randall. From the chain of title, it would appear that the building was built for Giles soon after he acquired the property in 1872, and it was certainly standing by 1887, the date of the party wall agreement with the Chicago Auditorium Association.
3. Architect: Otis L. Wheelock / Frank A. Randall, History of the Development of Building Construction in Chicago (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1949), p. 85]

B. Bibliography:

Randall, Frank A. History of the Development of Building Construction in Chicago. Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1949.

Prepared by Larry J. Homolka
Historian
National Park Service
Osmund Overby
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
August, 1963

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. This is an example of Chicago Commercial Architecture of the 1870's, and is one of the few surviving examples with a mansard roof of that period.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 100' (front) x 160'; four stories plus one basement and two attics above cornice line; nine bays (in three groups of three).
2. Layout - shape: Rectangular.
3. Wall construction: Shop fronts on first (ground) floor are later additions; the brown stone above is now painted a tan color. Smooth-faced stone with incised ornament on second through fifth floors; pilasters, rusticated between the second and third floors, divide facade into three sections of three bays each; there is an iron cornice at the sill of the second floor, and stone cornices at sills of the third and fourth floor. North and south sides are party walls. The east (rear) wall is brick.

4. Structural system, framing: Masonry bearing walls on the exterior, frames on the interior with cast iron columns.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Later.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Facade: One-over-one-light sash, double-hung, wooden. Low segmental arched heads on second and third floors, semi-circular heads on fourth floor. Rear: Double-hung wooden windows, four and six light sash, have low segmental arched heads.
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Mansard roof, sheet metal covering on forward slope. Cornice has been removed.
 - b. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Grouped attic windows in dormers, two stories high: one dormer survives with gabled roof and broken, scrolled metal pediment. Pyramidal tower over center bay has been removed.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Shops on ground floor, offices on upper floors, altered for various uses.
2. Stairways: Stairway and elevator core near center of building; simple enclosed wooden stair, later elevator.
3. Flooring: Wooden.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster walls. Stamped sheet metal ceilings.
5. Decorative features and trim: Decorated cast iron columns on the interior; on the ground floor they are fluted, and have Corinthian capitals.
6. Lighting: Electric.
7. Heating: Central.

D. Site:

General setting and orientation: The building faces west in the downtown business section of Chicago; there are party walls on north and south sides; Adler and Sullivan's Audi-

torium Building adjoins on the south.

Prepared by Osmund Overby
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